



[Home](#) → [Government](#) → [Connect with government](#) → [Consultations and engagements](#) → [Under review engagements](#) → Supervised consumption services review

# Supervised consumption services review

An expert committee is reviewing the social and economic impacts of current and proposed supervised consumption services.

**Engagement status:** Under review. Survey closed September 30, 2019

**Ministry responsible:** Health

## Overview

The Supervised Consumption Services Review Committee has been appointed to evaluate the social and economic impacts of current and proposed supervised consumption sites.

The committee brings together experts in business, real estate, population economics, social demography, research ethics, lived experience, addiction and recovery, harm reduction, First Nations health, mental health, trauma, pain management, law enforcement, crime reduction and justice.

They heard from Albertans to better understand their concerns and how these services affect their communities.

- [Meet the committee members](#)
- [Learn more about supervised consumption services](#)
- [Supervised consumption services backgrounder](#) (PDF, 264 KB)

## Public engagement

The committee heard feedback on a variety of topics, including:

- crime rates, needle debris, complaints of social disorder
- data collection, residential property values, business impacts (bottom lines, trends, closures)
- overdose reversals, emergency medical service calls, referrals to treatment providers
- proposed solutions to address impacts of the sites

## Online survey

Albertans and businesses provided feedback through online surveys until September 30, 2019.

## **In-person sessions**

Public engagement sessions were held in areas with currently operating or proposed supervised consumption services so the committee could hear from local residents.

## **Written submissions**

Written submissions were accepted until September 30, 2019.

## **Review mandate**

The review will focus on ways to:

- address social and economic impacts of existing sites on local neighbourhoods
- inform decisions around the establishment of future sites and ways to reduce the potential for negative social and economic impacts
- inform a provincial policy that outlines required criteria for provincial funding

The committee will compile findings on each of the existing and proposed supervised sites and submit them to government later this fall.

## **Committee members**

### **Rod Knecht, Chair**

Rod Knecht served as Edmonton's 22nd Chief of Police for 7 and a half years, having retired in October 2018. Prior to his service as Chief of Police, Rod was the Senior Deputy Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), ranked as the most senior uniform member of the RCMP.

Over the course of his 42 year policing career, he has spent 21 years in operational policing duties including rural, municipal and indigenous uniform policing, Major Crimes, Drug Section, Customs and Excise, Federal Section, Proceeds of Crime and Undercover Duties. He has spent a further twenty-one years in leadership roles in Ontario, Western Canada and Headquarters Ottawa, including several high profile criminal investigations and events throughout Canada and abroad.

### **Geri Bemister-Williams, Vice-Chair**

Professor Geri Bemister-Williams is a human behavioral scientist, post-secondary instructor, interventionist and expert on substance abuse and crime reduction. Her work centres on seeking therapeutic recovery in the justice and mental health systems. Much of Professor Bemister-William's research during her career as a criminologist has focused on the correlations between crime, trauma and substance abuse, which has made her knowledge useful at the intersection between mental health and the Canadian justice system (CJS).

She is currently developing curriculum at Red Deer College focused on aboriginal issues in the CJS. Her expertise has been utilized at the national and provincial levels of government as substance abuse has increasingly impacted Canadian citizens.

## **Dr. Ray Baker**

Dr. Baker specialized in occupational addiction medicine and recovery-oriented continuing care during his career as a physician licensed in British Columbia. He also served as an assistant professor in the University of British Columbia's faculty of medicine, where he directed the addiction medicine curriculum.

Dr. Baker has provided expert assistance to many organizations through consultation, policy development, personnel training, comprehensive diagnostic evaluations/treatment planning and expert testimony. He has also authored or contributed to literature on addiction treatment and served on the editorial board of the Journal of Addictive Diseases.

## **Steve Cormack**

Steve is a 24-year veteran of the RCMP, with postings in the Alberta communities of Lac La Biche, Faust, and Red Deer. Steve spent 15 years policing the City of Red Deer in a variety of duties including general uniform patrol, Criminal Intelligence, Serious Crimes, and 6 years in Drug Enforcement.

Steve is currently a residential and commercial real estate associate at Royal LePage Network Realty in Red Deer. He was an original member of the consortium to establish the Central Alberta Child Advocacy Centre.

## **Dr. Charl Els**

Dr. Charl Els is a psychiatrist, addiction specialist, and occupational physician. He completed 2 fellowships at the University of Toronto and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and holds a specialized graduate diploma in Insurance Medicine and medico-legal expertise from the University of Montreal.

For the past several years he served on the University of Alberta's Health Research Ethics Board, and he is regularly selected to chair review panels for the Medical Panels Office in Alberta. Dr. Els is a clinical professor at both the Department of Psychiatry and the Department of Medicine. He co-authored several of the clinical practice guidelines of the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine and serves on the Board of Directors for the Occupational and Environmental Medical Association of Canada.

## **Joan Hollihan**

On March 17, 2015, Joan lost her beloved son Jeremy to an apparent Fentanyl overdose. He was 16 years old.

Ms. Hollihan is a principal and senior consultant in Mercer's Calgary Health and Benefits business. Joan consults to clients in the areas of health plan design, funding and administration. She holds a bachelor of commerce (majored in finance) from the University of Calgary.

## **Paul Maxim**

Paul Maxim is a former professor of economics at Wilfrid Laurier University and director of the Masters of International Public Policy program at the Balsillie School of International Affairs in Waterloo, Ontario. Paul joined Laurier in 2006 as the associate vice president: research. Previously, he was an associate dean and faculty member at Western University in London, Ontario.

Dr. Maxim has been a visiting scholar in the Criminology Institute at Cambridge University and in the Department of Economics at the University of Copenhagen, where he was awarded a residential scholar award by the National Bank of Denmark.

## **Dr. Rob Tanguay**

Dr. Tanguay is a psychiatrist who completed 2 fellowships, one in addiction medicine and one in pain medicine. He is the medical lead for Alberta Opioid Addiction training for Alberta Health Services. Dr. Tanguay is the regional director for Alberta and Northwest Territories for the Canadian Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM) and the incoming president of the Pain Society of Alberta. He is the founder of the Opioid Deprescribing Program with Alberta Health Services and the Transitional Outpatient Pain Program for Spine (TOPPS) clinic working with spinal surgeons to optimize spinal surgery and reduce opioid use after surgery and will also become the co-chair of the AHS Alberta Pain Strategy. Dr. Tanguay is also the lead lecturer for addiction for the University of Calgary medical school.

Academically he is involved in research in addiction, chronic pain, opioids and cannabis and is a member of the Hotchkiss Brain Institute and the Mathison Centre for Mental Health Research and

Education at the University of Calgary.

## News

- [Expert panel to review supervised consumption sites](#) (August 19, 2019)

© 2019 Government of Alberta

Home

